THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Sanction has already been issued for opening 12 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices in Gazipur District. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

STATEMENT

Names of places in district Gazipur of Uttar Pradesh for which sanction has been issued for opening of 12 extra department branch post offices.

1. Khanshari
2. Bharsar
3. Deoria
4. Vashu Chak
5. Ameda
6. Akranpur Banjaripur
7. Semure
8. Sabbalpur Kalan
9. Nasirpur
10. Asaon
11. Meerpur
12. Atraon

Kutir Jyoti Yojana in Bihar

3205. SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have started "Kutir Jyoti" scheme in Bihar;

(b) if so, the amount allocated by the Union Government to the State Electricity Board for the implementation of this scheme through "Rural Electrification Corporation Limited".

(c) whether the Government propose to give any concession to the beneficiaries under this scheme especially to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (d). With a view to provided single-point light connections to the households of rural families below the poverty line, including Harijans and Adivasis, a welfare programme known as 'Kutir Jyoti' was initiated by the Government in 1988-89, all over the country, including Bihar . Under the scheme, which was financed from Central grants during 1988-89 and 1989-90, the task of identifying the beneficiaries was vested with the State Government concerned. The Rural Electrification Corporation allocation in all, Rs. 419.933 lakhs to the Bihar State Electricity Board under the programme, for releasing 1,99,605 single point light connections. According to the available information, the State Electricity Board has released 1,67,886 connections.

The scheme was not continued after 31.3.1991.

[English]

Post Offices in the Country

3206. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices functioning in the country at present and the average area and population covered by a post office;

(b) whether any schemes have been formulated by the Government for expansion and modernisation of postal services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGYYA NAIDU): (a) There are, as on 1.4.91, a total of 148719 post offices functioning in the country. The all-India average with regard to population served per post office and the average area served by a post office, as on 1.4.91, works out to 4607 and 22.10 Sq. Kms. respectively.

(b) and (c). Yes Sir, postal network has been progressively undergoing both expansion and modernisation under the plan programmes. During the current year as on 13.3.92, 998 post offices have been sanctioned. The following measures are envisaged for modernisation of postal infrastructure so as to improve postal services:-

Introduction of mechanised sorting equipment in selected offices, installation of micro-processor based multi-purpose counter machines use of satellite communication for transmission of money orders; and gradual computerisation of postal savings bank and postal life insurance operations.

Excess Billing of Telephones in Cities

3207. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the complaints of excess billing in several cities including those having services of advanced electronic system; and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to check the pilferage of telephone calls scope of excess billing and taping of telephones?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Steps taken to check the pilferage of telephone calls are phasing out of old telephone exchanges, provision of Dynamic STD control facility to the customers form Electronic Telephone exchange to lock or unlock their STD/ISD facility alongwith supply of STD/ISD details, provision of detailed billing to the customers in non-digital exchange through Automatic Massage Accounting (AMA) equipment, continurs monitoring of exchange equipment including metering circuit and external plant, computerisation of telephone billing and precautions against unauthorised use.

As regards tapping of telephones, the Department of Telecommunications do not tap the telephonic conversation of subscribers, but only provide technical facilities as and when required by the authorised officers.

Production of Gold

3208. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT:
SHRIMATI MAHENDRA KUMAR:
SHRIMATI RITA VERMA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the production of gold during 1991;

(b) the steps taken by the Government during the year to increase the production of gold; and